

- Build single-stall bathrooms to mitigate bathroom confrontations and problems.
- Enclose the campus. (This is more a measure to keep outsiders out rather than to keep insiders in.) Beside defining property boundaries, a robust fence forces a perpetrator to consciously trespass, rather than allowing casual entry.
- Make certain that the school building and classroom areas can be closed and locked off from the gym and other facilities used during off hours.
- Minimize secluded hiding places for unauthorized persons, both inside and outside buildings.
- Do not eliminate windows, but use them strategically. Consider incorporating clerestories or secure skylights that allow light in but that are less vulnerable than typical windows.
- Maximize the line of sight within buildings.
- Large wide spaces, like hallways or commons, should have sufficient vertical dimension so space does not feel restrictive to students.
- Consider installing student lockers in classrooms or other areas easy to monitor so that there is no single locker area that becomes a bottleneck, and there is always the deterrence of an adult nearby (exhibit 1.8).
- Do not cut corners on communications, especially those required for security. Make certain that your facility has built in the necessary receivers and transmitters throughout the structure to allow for dependable two-way radio and cellular phone use. (Sometimes radio frequency communication is not possible deep within a large, structurally dense facility.)
- Where possible, have buildings and other student gathering areas set back from the streets, driveways, or parking areas by at least 50 feet.
- Install a basic security alarm system throughout all hallways, administrative offices, and rooms containing high-value property, such as computers, VCRs, shop equipment, laboratory supplies, and musical instruments.
- Allow a law enforcement officer to live on campus. (In some school districts, an officer is allowed to move his or her own trailer to a strategic location on campus and receive free utilities in exchange for prenegotiated and formally contracted responsibilities.) The deterrent effect of a police vehicle parked on campus all night and weekend can be great. Such an arrangement can also provide both detection and response in situations where damage is being inflicted upon the facility, but no alarm system would normally detect it (exhibit 1.9).
- Provide a separate parking area for work-study students or those who will be leaving during the school day. (This allows the main student parking lot to be closed off during the school day.)
- Make certain that exterior lighting is sufficient for safety. Lights mounted on the exterior of buildings often are inadequate for adjoining driveways or parking lots.
- Do not underestimate the value of trees and landscaping on a school campus. An attractive, well-maintained school is generally less attractive to thieves.

Exhibit 1.10 shows a school with several of these ideas incorporated. (Note: This is not an actual architectural drawing, does not incorporate basic facility requirements, and is not drawn to scale.)

### ***The role of order maintenance***

One additional consideration that cannot be overlooked is the perception of a lack of order on a school campus.



**Exhibit 1.8. Cramped locker bays are some schools' most vulnerable area for fights, theft, drug deals, and so forth.**

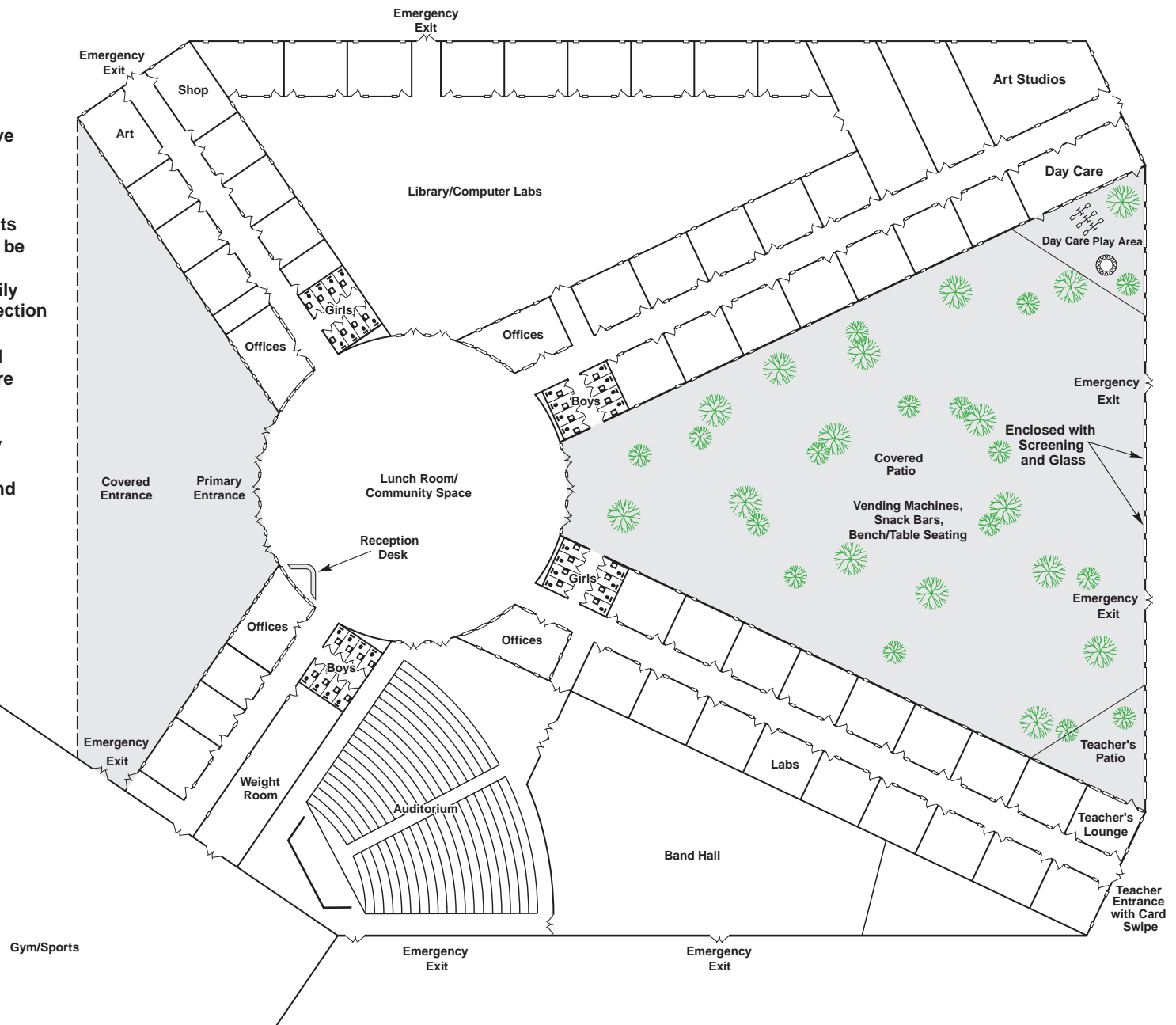




**Exhibit 1.9. Will anyone be aware of malicious activities occurring at your school during off hours? This senior “prank” destroyed more than 20 trees at this high school.**

- Interior walls of administrative offices are primarily glass
- If school grows, extend classroom “wings”
- Restrooms are individual units
- Covered patio outer wall can be enclosed for winter
- Primary entrance can be easily enclosed for contraband detection if necessary in the future
- Emergency exits are alarmed
- Windows in classrooms where possible; use narrow glazing and glass block
- Avoid a flat roof that is easily accessible
- Minimize hiding places around building exterior

Not to Scale



**Exhibit 1.10. This drawing depicts a school design that incorporates some security-conscious features.**

If a school is perceived as unsafe (i.e., it appears that no adult authority prevails on a campus), then “undesirables” will come in, and the school will actually become unsafe. This is an embodiment of the broken window theory: one broken window left unrepaired will encourage additional windows to be broken. Seemingly small incidents or issues such as litter on a school campus can provide the groundwork for (or even just the reputation of) a problem school. Issues of vandalism and theft can be almost as harmful to a school as actual violence because they can create a fertile environment for loss of control and community confidence.

Issues contributing to a school’s overall order maintenance must therefore be taken seriously, not unlike any other public facility. Reducing theft, deterring vandalism and graffiti, keeping outsiders off campus, keeping the facility in good repair, improving poor lighting, maintaining attractive landscaping, and

getting rid of trash are all important to school security (exhibit 1.11).

Technologies such as cameras, sensors, microdots (for identifying ownership), and antigraffiti sealers can contribute significantly in many (but not all) situations and are possible approaches to further support a school’s order maintenance.

Too often school districts undervalue the ultimate importance of reliable and conscientious maintenance, janitorial, and groundskeeping staff. Their ultimate contribution to the order maintenance of a school can be enormous. Additionally, the janitorial staff needs to be selected with almost the same care as the teaching staff because they have great access to and knowledge of a school facility. Contracting out this work without complete background checks of all workers can lead to many problems in the long run.





**Exhibit 1.11. Keeping a school well maintained and litter free is paramount in a school's order maintenance.**